

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS.

Report of the Joint Committee—on the Tariff Bill.

The Joint Committee, appointed to consider so much of the Governor's Address as relates to the proceedings of the late Convention of the people of South Carolina, and the purposes and policy thereof; and also, the Resolutions of the State of Pennsylvania thereon; and to whom have been referred the Resolutions of the State of New-Hampshire upon the subject of the Proclamation of the President of the United States in reference to the same, have entered on the consideration of the matters intrusted to them, and respectfully submit the following REPORT, in part.

On examining the proceedings of the late Convention of the People of South Carolina, the Committee find, that they announce, on the part of that State, pretensions of a novel and dangerous character, which, if persisted in, and carried out in practice, can only terminate in the destruction of the Government. South Carolina claims for herself as one of the States composing this Union, the right of annulling at discretion any act of the Government of the United States, which she may regard as unconstitutional; and has undertaken to exercise this right in reference to the laws imposing duties on the importation of foreign goods. In a public act, denominated an Ordinance, the Convention declare, that those laws are null and void, and make it the duty of the Legislature to adopt such measures, as may be necessary to prevent their enforcement within limits of the State. The Addresses and Reports accompanying the Ordinance, set forth the reasons, by which the Convention endeavor to justify their proceedings, and appeal to the people of the several States for their sanction and approval.

Such pretensions, made in so respectable a quarter, with every appearance of earnestness, and officially communicated to the Government of this Commonwealth, will naturally require from the General Court the expression of some opinion upon their correctness and consistency with the Constitution and Laws of the country. The Committee accordingly propose, after the farther and more mature examination of the subject which seems to be due to its extraordinary importance, to submit a Report upon these